5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

powering the stench the greater is the probability of a bite, as the brute will only swallow putrefying flesh. Fresh meat is carried away between the jaws and hidden in some safe place until it decomposes. The line is a loose one of rattan, many yards in length, and is not made fast, so that the reptile may drag it away with him when he bolts the bait. The buoy at the other end of the line floats on the water and serves as a clue to his whereabouts; and when he is discovered he is hauled ashore and pinioned. While this is being done he is addressed in eulogistic language and beguiled, so to speak, into offering no resistance; but the moment his arms and legs are bound across his back and he is powerless for evil, they howl at him and deride him for his credulity. They then rip up his belly for human remains and hew him to pieces. He struggles furiously at this stage but to no purpose, and is speedily decapitated with an axe. A short stick pointed at both ends is often used instead of a hook, and is secured to the bait in such a fashion that it is swallowed lengthwise. To ensure this result the bait is hung upon a bough overhanging the river, but several feet above the level of the water to oblige the crocodile to spring upwards in order to reach it. The efforts he makes to disgorge the wood work it round so as to stick in his throat crosswise. It is usual to hang a dog higher up in the same tree so that he may attract the cruising reptile by his unhallowed howling.

The Sarawak crocodiles vary in length from ten to twenty-six feet, but the common size is from ten to fifteen feet. They become a public nuisance from the date of their first human meal, and are thereupon hunted to death. Manang Blitang, of Yong, is perhaps the most successful and persistent crocodile trapper in the Rajang River. He is supposed to possess supernatural power over them, and his services are therefore always in request where a seizure has occurred, and the kinsfolk are anxious to discover the whereabouts of the guilty reptile.

The porcupines and monkeys are hunted for their bezoar stones,[1] the squirrels for their fur and their teeth (squirrels' teeth are used for necklace tassels); bears and tiger-cats and panthers are hunted for their canine teeth, their skins being used for war-jackets and seat mats; the hornbills, jungle fowl, and argus pheasants for their plumes for decorating helmets and sword sheaths; the bill of the rhinoceros hornbill is wanted for ear pendants and helmet crests, and crocodile teeth are wanted for ointment cases; bears' teeth and boars' tusks are wanted for charms, and the crimson horn of the *buceros rhinoceros* is used

[1] Calculi formed in their stomachs, much valued as amulets.

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

when the storm-clouds have hurried overhead and the winds shrieked through the tree-tops in fierce discord, ruthlessly twanging the harp-strings of Nature, I have understood why it is that the Dyaks believe that the lone forests are inhabited by the spirits of the wind and the rivers, of the mountains and the trees.

No one can adequately realize the Equatorial Bornean jungle until he sees it in all its wonder—the heated steamy stillness broken by weird sounds, the colossal trees, the birds with brilliant plumage, and the infinite variety of monkeys among the branches, sitting, hanging by hands or tails, leaping, grimacing, jabbering, as they see the strange sight of human beings invading their domains.

What are the wild animals that the traveller is likely to meet as he walks through the jungle? The animal life of Borneo is akin to that of Sumatra or Java, but with certain differences. Borneo is free from tigers, and this is fortunate, for travelling through the forests would be dangerous indeed if tigers were likely to be encountered. The only wild animals to be met with are the small and comparatively harmless tree-tiger, and the small brown honey-bear, but neither of them is much feared. There are, of course, ferocious crocodiles in the rivers, and many varieties of snakes, varying in size from the python downwards. But the cobra, so much dreaded in India, is not met with in Borneo, and death from a snake-bite is very rare. The elephant and the rhinoceros seem to be confined to the north end of the island. There is the great man-like ape—the *orang-utan*, or *maias*, as it is called by the Dyaks. It is only found in a limited area, in the territory between the Batang Lupar and the Rejang Rivers. As a rule, this animal does not exceed the height of four feet two inches, though there are

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

●136 stories told of its attaining a far greater size. The height, however, gives a poor idea of the animal's bulk and strength. The body is as large as that of an average man, but the legs are extremely short. Its arms are of great length, and measure over seven feet in spread. The whole body is covered with long red hair. It rarely attacks man, but when provoked is very ferocious, and as its strength is very great, it is a foe not to be despised. There are numerous wild boars in the jungle, but they never attack the traveller, and are not a source of danger.

137 §24 The vegetation of Borneo is rich and varied. By the seashore and at the mouths of the rivers there grows the *nipa* palm, "the tree of a thousand uses." The young leaves are used for making *kadjangs*, the awnings with which Dyak boats are covered. The old leaves are made into *attap* for the roofs and walls of their houses. From [272] the blossom a sweet drink is obtained, and this is con- [263] verted into sugar. From the ashes of the burnt stump of this palm salt is obtained. As one travels up a Bornean river the *nipa* palms become less and less plentiful, and one finds the banks covered with mangroves. These trees thrive on the muddy banks. A network of roots grows out of the stem several feet above the soil, and keeps them firm. At night these mangroves are lit up by myriads of fireflies. The missionary stationed at Banting many years ago had all the mangrove-trees, except one on each side of his landing-place, cut down, and on the darkest night there was no difficulty in knowing where his boat was to stop. These two trees, covered with fireflies, were not to be mistaken in the surrounding darkness.

In Borneo there are many varieties of palms. There is the *nibong* palm, the trunk of which is often used for the

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

One other very interesting little detail occurs on cloth 35.924 and is figured on pl. II, *i*; this is called *gari enk* [*engku*], my clothes; perhaps it is a private mark or a mark of possession.

Further details of the meaning of some anthropomorphs are given at length in the note on the *manang bali* jacket, pp. 40–46.

ZOOMORPHS

VERTEBRATES

Deer

Three kinds of animals are usually termed "deer" by most authors on Bornean ethnography. These are *rusa*, a true deer (*Cervus equinus*)—this is a variety of the sambar which is widely distributed in the East—*kijang*, the barking deer (*Cervulus muntjac*) and *plandok*, the diminutive mouse-deer (*Tragulus*, two sp.), which is not really a deer; this inhabits the jungle, whereas the two former are generally found in clearings.

The patterns in the deer cloths are particularly interesting but difficult to follow. When, however, they are carefully traced out, representations of the stag have "branching" or "crossed antlers", the doe is hornless and the udder is represented; on one cloth where both sexes occur another pattern, a "young deer", *anak rusa*, is also shown (pl. III, *h*). All the deer patterns have a line of darker spots down the centre of the form, but the deer have a uniform brown colour without any markings; this type of decoration is used in some other patterns.

The muntjac is very important as an omen to all Bornean peoples, but least so to the Iban. The bark of the deer prevents people from continuing their journey, and even divorces people who are newly married. The little chevrotains, *plandok*, have the same function so far as a journey is concerned, but otherwise they are not very important. Sir Spencer St John says (I, p. 64): "To hear the cry of a deer is at all times unlucky"; we cannot find any specific mention of the *rusa* as being an omen animal apart from the general statement that the noises made by all "deer" are bad omens. If, as we suppose, the patterns on the cloths act largely as talismans or as amulets, it seems rather strange that the *kijang* and *plandok* are entirely unrepresented

so far as we are aware, whereas the *rusa*, which apparently is the least important in this respect, is frequently represented. It may be that the decorative branching antlers, which this species alone possesses, appeal strongly to these artistic women. Deer are regularly hunted with dogs for food, and perhaps success in the chase may be the underlying idea of these representations on the cloths.

Tigers

Highly conventionalized tiger, *remaung*, patterns are frequent on cloths (pl. iv), and in basketry the foot of a *remaung* is sometimes represented. As the true tiger, *remaung bendar*, does not inhabit Borneo, it can be known to the Iban only by repute. Of the six species of *Felis* in Sarawak, by far the most important is the clouded tiger-cat or clouded tree-leopard, *engkuli*, *Felis nebulosa*, and it is the *remaung* most frequently depicted. *F. planiceps*, *jelu mayau*, is often very destructive in the gardens, as it is very fond of fruit, and digs up and eats sweet potatoes. *F. bengalensis*, *mayau kuching batu*, is about the size of a domestic cat and steals fowls; it lives in rocks (*batu*). *F. marmorata*, *remaung raras*, the marbled cat, is larger than a domestic cat and is very fierce. The other two species are very rare.

The supernumerary legs and paws which appear in many designs, as in pl. iv, may be suggestive of the agility and ferocity of these animals. The large size of the paws is especially noticeable in most of the designs.

It might be supposed that the patterns were intended to confer strength, agility and fierceness on the wearers, but as the designs are almost confined to the *bidang* of the woman the idea of protection seems here to be indicated, not only of the woman herself but of her crops and fowls.

Interesting designs are the sleeping cats, *mayau tindok*, represented on pl. xvii, *r–u*.

Shrews

The *Gymnura raffiesi*, *aji*, *aji bulan* (*tikus bulan*, "moon rat"; *tikus antu*, "spirit rat", Malay) is the survivor of a Tertiary group of Insectivora. It is not unlike a large rough-haired shrew and it has some affinities with hedgehogs; for convenience it may be termed a shrew. It is mainly white in colour. It is purely nocturnal and lives in the jungle close to water under the

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

roots of trees or in holes it has excavated. Its favourite food seems to be cockroaches, termites and various larvae, but it eats all kinds of insects and some vegetable matter, such as leaves and small berries. It has a peculiar offensive odour. When caught alive it is extremely savage and bites at anything within reach, snarling and growling.

Aji is one of the subsidiary omen animals, and is supposed to be a manifestation of Klieng, the war god and greatest hero of Iban legends. In the *S.D.D. aji* is also stated to be "a title of the Dayak fairy god Kling", and he is referred to as "The god Kling Aji who is brave". Ling Roth (I, p. 332) gives a tale from Brooke Low's notes in which Aji is the brother-in-law of Klieng and there is nothing to associate him with the moon rat. Klieng is a hero, not a god. Endless stories are told of this mythical being, most of them warlike and spectacular, and so representations of the shrew might be expected to confer bravery on the wearer of the garment, if it were not almost confined to *bidang*; perhaps the *aji* patterns refer in some way to the hero.

The well-known pugnacity of the animal is suggested in the fighting attitude of two shrews facing one another (pl. v, *g*), a favourite motive on shrew-patterned cloths.

Examples of characteristic shrew patterns are illustrated on pl. v, *a–e*; *f* is a shrew which occurs on a tiger cloth and is an example of the influence of one pattern upon another, as characteristic *remaung* paws are indicated in addition to shrew legs; the distinctive snout is clearly shown. Judging from the cloths the shrew appears to like the sweet-smelling *bangkit* fruit, for several designs show the *aji* on one (pl. VI, *a*, *d*, *e*). One shrew (pls. XXIX; VI, *c*) has white spots, which may be rice grains, in its stomach and another (pls. XXX, A; VI, *b*) is actually depicted inside a *plangka*, "husking box", but there is a very different kind of *plangka*, see p. 78. There is no record of the shrew feeding on rice grains, and it seems very improbable that a jungle animal would enter the houses even if it could climb up the ladder.

Burong, *or bird, patterns*

The reason for the preponderance of bird patterns is evident, for mostly good omen birds are portrayed which will ensure success in whatever venture is being undertaken, although other birds are also represented. In

X 531 the illustration on pls. VII, VIII, IX, no special types of birds can be distinguished, except pl. IX, *a*, which is a variety of swift or swallow and is always represented by a large wing, and *e*, which has distinctive tail feathers of the argus pheasant. Bird patterns are most often used in the narrow borders at the sides of the cloths and therefore have to fit into rather narrow parallel lines. Birds whose wings are covering their bodies are represented at pl. VII, *i*, *j*, *k*, and birds with "combs" at pl. VII, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o*, *p*; these seem to refer to the comb-like effect of the feathers on the wings rather than to a comb on a bird's head; *q* and *r* of pl. VII represent a bird with limbs outstretched.

Birds in action are figured on pl. VIII, where some are shown eating the sweet *bangkit* fruit, in *a* and *b* part of the fruit is seen with the bird almost hidden by it; others are depicted on a netting needle or spool of which a clear shape is seen at *e* and degenerate forms at *f* and *g*. Three birds are described as "rowing" or swimming, *h*, *i*, *j*. Those at *k* and *l*, which are dancing, are particularly interesting, as in one of the three ancient Dyak dances in which the chiefs leap up and down with extended arms in imitation of the flight of a soaring hawk. It will be noticed that these two figures are quite distinct from all the other bird designs.

Special types of birds are illustrated on pl. IX, but as their designations are obscure we are not able to discuss them; one (*h*) seems to be an omen for rain. We have a note that *burong belingkian* (pl. IX, *e*) is the argus pheasant, [136] *Argusianus grayi*, which has two distinctively long tail feathers, but *ruai* is the common Iban name for the bird. The ocelli of the long wing feathers are perhaps represented on pl. XVII, *e*, and possibly on pl. XVII, *d*.

At the foot of plate IX are four young birds, *j*–*m*, and a fifth, *n*, has wings typical of swifts in other designs. A bird with long legs is shown in fig. 7 and in the bottom row of fig. 23, B.

The elaborate figures on pl. X are named after *Singalang Burong* himself, whose earthly form is *lang*, the kite, *Haliastur intermedius*, a sub-species of *H. indus*, the Brahminy kite of India. The striped feathers of the kite, *e*, *f*, are occasionally represented as independent designs and doubtless have the same significance as the whole bird. The obscure design labelled "*kengkang lang*", referred to on pp. 33, 35, 36, 37, 73, 84, 113, 118 and illustrated in fig. 18, *b* and in pl. XXVIII, B, is of peculiar interest.

X 531
136

Favourite designs, especially on *sirat*, are *mata puna*, "the eyes of the

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

small green pigeon" ("*Treron*, all species except *T. capellei*", *S.D.D.*); perhaps it is represented for the purpose of protecting the crops from the pigeons (pl. xvii, *k*, *l*, *m*).

Crocodiles

Although the crocodile, *baya*, is frequently used as a decorative motive in war-boats and is carved on the posts of the long house, it seems only to appear on the textiles used as blankets.

The crocodile designs, as will be seen from those figured on pl. xi, are amongst the most life-like representations on the cloths. The blankets upon which they appear and other designs are used as wall decorations as well as for their more practical purpose. Crocodiles on *pua* are shown in Camb. Mus. photos. Indon. Born. 362, 387, 394.

"A special deity, Pulang Gana, presides over the rice-culture of the Ibans, but the crocodile also is intimately concerned with their rice-culture.... On going to a new district Ibans always make a life-size image of a crocodile in clay on the land chosen for the paddy-farm.... When the rites are duly performed this clay crocodile destroys all the pests which eat the rice.... Many Ibans claim the live crocodile as a relative and...will not eat the flesh of crocodiles nor kill them, save in revenge when a crocodile has taken one of their household. They say that the spirit of the crocodile sometimes becomes a man just like an Iban....Another reason given for their fear of killing crocodiles is that Ribai, the river-god, sometimes becomes a crocodile", as may Klieng, who gives them heads in war and first advised the Iban to make friends with Pulang Gana (Hose and McDougall, 1901, pp. 198, 199; 1912, II, pp. 88, 89). The belief that crocodiles are afraid to eat Iban is reported by the Rev. W. Chalmers as quoted by Ling Roth, I, pp. 348–350.

Lizards

Borneo abounds in lizards; Beccari mentions 49 species, one of which is the monitor lizard, *bayak*, *Varanus* sp., which reaches a yard in length; it is common and its flesh is highly esteemed. This is conventionally represented on pl. xii, *l*, but what is evidently the same lizard is realistically shown in shell-work on certain *kalambi*, pp. 51, 52. Large "lizards" adorn a *pua* (1905, 419) in the British Museum, which, if they are lizards, are probably

X531 monitors; and it is possible that the six reptiles on our cloth 35.931 are
136 monitors and not crocodiles.

The much smaller green grass lizards which are represented from *a* to *e* as young ones, *anak lachau*, are depicted as full grown in *f*, *g*, *h*, but except at *h* the legs are not shown. This may possibly be due to the fact that the narrow borders in which they usually appear do not leave much room for them.

Examples of skink lizards, known as *engkarong*, are shown at *i* and *j* on pl. XII, and are interesting because they have distinct heads and tails. The stiff lizard or skink, *engkarong kejong*, figured at *k* occurs only once in the cloths.

Snakes

X531 Snakes, as such, are not shown on our cloths, though several border stripes are said to represent banded snakes, pp. 29, 33, 55, 68, 73, 112. This seems to be more in the nature of a colour effect than an intention to delineate actual snakes. Two *pua* in the Sarawak Museum, nos. 244, 247 (Camb. Mus. photo. Indon. Born. nos. 357, 360) have six large snakes that extend along the whole length of each cloth.

Occasionally, as on a cloth, no. 407 in the British Museum, and on a *sirat* in the Sarawak Museum, no. 262 (Camb. Mus. photo. Indon. Born. no. 407), one finds a folded band termed *leku sawa*, "twining of the python or twisting like a python".

[776] Perham says that the feeling of the Iban towards prominent members of the snake tribe is something more than reverential regard, much the same as is given to *antu*, but it is "a personal and not a tribal deity". The python,
[136] *sawa*, and the cobra, *tedong*, are the snakes generally selected by the *antu* for their habitation, but only individual ones.

Frogs

The frog designs naturally fall into two categories: (1) the true frog,
[776] *engkatak*, and (2) more or less mythical conceptions of it and those frog-like creatures known as *gajai*; we do not know why that shown in pl. XIII, *k* was labelled "*entilang gajai*".

[136] (1) Of the first group one, a species of frog, known as *pamā*, is sometimes represented anthropomorphically, pl. XIII, *g*, but at *f* it is somewhat more like a frog.

12: Haddon & Start E-4 (no date) 1936 OC6 Iban OC6

Frogs are used for food and they are considered a great delicacy; quite life-like representations of them are not uncommon, such as the examples drawn on pl. XIII, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*. The curious appendages on the fore-limbs of *d* cannot be accounted for.

(2) The other designs are of mythical creatures with more or less frog-like bodies and human heads, whose special significance is unknown to us. That on pl. XIII, *h* is labelled ***engkaramba engkatak***. ***Engkaramba gajai***, *i*, ***gajai***, *j*, and ***entilang gajai***, *k*, can scarcely be expected to look like frogs as they are mythical creatures. All these occur on ***pua***.

Salampandai is a female spirit and the maker of men. Apparently she is never visible in her own person, but she is supposed to have a manifestation in a creature something like a frog, which is also called Salampandai. This creature is regarded with reverence and must not be killed. If it goes up into an Iban house, they offer it sacrifice and let it go again, but it is very seldom seen. The noise it makes is said to be the sound of the spirit's hammer, as she works at her anvil in the unseen regions hammering out children as they are born into the world. The creature is supposed to be somewhere near the house whenever a child is born; it approaches from behind if the infant is a girl and in front if a boy (see p. 115). The *S.D.D.* says: "***Selampandai***, a species of locust only heard at night. It is the manifestation on earth of Selampandai".

Kalambi gajai is a jacket with a frog pattern (*S.D.D.*) and it appears to us that this ***gajai*** may be a representation of Salampandai as a frog. If this be so its occurrence on a cloth worn by women would be very appropriate, but we do not know if this is a woman's ***kalambi***.

Invertebrates

Spiders

Many species of spiders exist in Borneo, and some are large and have a poisonous bite; it is probably as a protection from such harm that they are portrayed on the cloths.

Spiders, ***emplawa***, usually are delineated correctly with eight legs, but exuberance in design and perhaps the speed at which they travel occasionally makes them appear as if they had more. They are sometimes represented with another animal inside them: (pl. xv, *a*), a lizard (pl. xv, *c*), a bird

X531 (pl. xv, *b*) and birds' heads (pl. xv, *d*). This is, of course, impossible, and may be due merely to the artist's urge to fill up a vacant space. Examples of young spiders are drawn on pl. xiv at *a* and *b* (these usually have but four legs), and of other spiders at *c*, *d* and *e* on the same plate.

Centipedes

This group of designs on pl. xvi, *a–f*, is very common on narrow border stripes of *bidang*, and its use is probably protective. The designs are very suggestive of the *embayar* itself, the so-called "hundred legs" making a definite appeal. In one cloth, 35.881, the centipede (pl. xvi, *d*) extends for half of the length of the cloth and finishes with a curly twist at each end. The ardent desire for bi-symmetry which the Iban designer possesses often results in the head and tail of a creature being represented as much alike, but in the centipede there is actually this similarity.

Scorpions, insects, etc.

X531 There are other zoomorphs, some of which are not of very frequent occurrence in the cloths, such as those illustrated on pl. xvii. A scorpion, *kala*, ●136 is shown by *a*; and a scorpion's nippers, *spit kala*, by *b*. The *buyah*, a beetle or moth, is represented by *c*. *Pantak* is a wasp, the *S.D.D.* gives: "*Pantak*, a small dark-coloured wasp which inhabits holes in trees, or perhaps, more frequently holes in the banks of streams". *Pantak penandok* (pp. 74, 118; pl. xxvii, *d*) may be translated as the wound caused by the sting of a wasp, and *pantak penandok iku ruai* (p. 113; pl. xxvii, *e*) may be such a wound, or possibly the scarification preparatory to the cupping process (*nandok*), which may be likened to the ocelli on the feathers of the argus pheasant (p. 128); but *ruai* also means the verandah of a Dayak house. At one time we thought that the term on p. 113 might have reference to clay nests of solitary wasps sheltering under the verandah of a long house. Here we must leave it pending local information. A stylized wasp is shown in *f* on a flower pattern, *pantak lelambak*. A grub, *empetui*, *g*. Heads of locusts, *pala* [262] *buntak*, *h*, *i*, are very commonly represented, perhaps for the purpose of protecting the crops. Crabs are eaten; young crabs, *anak ketam*, are shown in *n*, *o*, *p* with only four legs, and at *q*. the nippers, *spit*, of the freshwater crab *gramja*.

Leeches

All those who have travelled through the jungle in Borneo are unpleasantly acquainted with the land leeches, *lintah*, which stretch out from the foliage and fasten themselves not only on exposed portions of the body but find their way beneath the clothing; periodic examination of the whole person is sometimes necessary in order to remove these blood-suckers. It is rather surprising that these creatures are depicted, so far as we know, on but a few *bidang*. On pl. XVI, *j*, *k*, are seen leeches on a creeper and a flower. Leeches with interlocked mouths are called *betegam*, which means "to swallow all at once"; it is physically impossible for a leech to swallow anything except blood. Their coiled-up (*besimpan*) tails are shown at *l* and *m*; the former is from one of four *bidang* in the Sarawak Museum (nos. 213, 217, 219, 465; Camb. Mus. photos. Indon. Born. 324, 329, 330, 409).

We do not understand the significance of the hooks on the bodies of the leeches. It is tempting to assume that leeches are represented as charms to keep them away from the wearer of the *bidang*.

The *S.D.D.* gives "*Lintah*, the water leech", but the *lintah* on the cloths are certainly land leeches.

PHYLLOMORPHS

The *empili*, mast, drawn on pl. XVIII, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, is a wild nut which is the favourite food of wild pigs; it, in conjunction with the arenga palm, *entibap* (pl. XXII, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*), and ratan leaves is very frequently used as the decoration for the narrow patterned stripes at the sides of the cloths.

The arenga palm, *Arenga saccharifera*, has many uses: the juice from the inflorescence makes sugar and, when fermented, toddy or palm-wine; the black fibres around the trunk and the bases of the fronds make very strong and durable rope, preferred to ratan in house-building; the cotton-like down is used as tinder, *lulup*; and the trunks afford excellent sago.

There are many varieties of the climbing palm (*Calamus* sp.) known as *rotan* by the Skarang and Saribas Iban and as *wi* by other Iban: the thinner kinds are the more valuable. Baskets and mats are made of split ratan and pliable ratans are used as ropes. The thorny tendrils (*tangai*) and leaves of the ratan (*daun wi*) are very frequently represented in the narrow border patterns of *bidang* and occasionally in those of *pua* (pl. XXII, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*).

X531 137 Many other jungle plants and one species of ratan have very large thorns which make the clearing of the jungle very difficult; two crossed thorny stems of ratan, *unak wi bekait*, are illustrated on pl. XXII, *e*.

The *tangkong* "creeper" (? a climbing plant), which is a jungle plant with scented pendant flowers, provides many characteristic patterns. The designs *b*, *c* on pl. XIX and all those on pl. XX are derived from this plant. The *randau* is some kind of creeper or climbing plant.

Illustrations of *bangkit* flowers are given in pls. XIX, *a*; XXI, *e*; the fruit is always represented as lozenge-shaped (pls. VI, *a*, *d*, *e*; XVIII, *i*, *j*, *k*) and is one of the most common motives on woven and embroidered cloths. The *S.D.D.* says, "*Bangkit*, a scented flower, scented leaves or fruit of certain jungle trees used as scent or ornaments to decorate the hair or body".

The fruit of the *beringen* tree is occasionally represented (pl. XVIII, *l*) and much more often that of various species of mango (*Mangifera*): we illustrate *buah bunut*, "horse-mango" (pl. XXII, *r*) and *buah angkong* (pl. XXII, *q*, *s*). "*Angkong*, a tree bearing strong-scented diamond-shaped fruit (the horse manggo)", *S.D.D.*

X531 136 A tree with its trunk and branches outlined by the light of fireflies dominates the surface of *pua* 35.922 (pl. XXI, *c*), and *pua* 35.928 is very similar. Species of large fireflies are common in Borneo, and when they settle in enormous numbers on a bush or tree it appears as if on fire; the white line round the designs suggests this remarkable phenomenon.

X531 137 262 Very frequently repeated in all the kinds of cloths are the young shoots of the bamboo *pemuchok tubu*, which are used as a vegetable; we illustrate a few on pl. XVIII, *f*, *g*, *h*.

The curled tops of the *rĕsam* fern, *gelong paku rĕsam*, are occasionally depicted in a realistic manner (pl. XVIII, *m*, *n*, *o*). *Paku* is the general name for ferns, particularly for *Hollenium esculentum*, which is eaten as a vegetable. The *deman* is the fern *Gleichenia dichotoma*.

X531 137 824 Other useful plants are represented on cloths, the most frequent being the *bingka lia*, "root of the ginger" (*lia* or *liah*), and gourds. Seeds, *leka*, are shown on pl. XIX, *f* of the *labu*, "a white pumpkin, gourd, calabash (*Cucurbita lagenaria*)", *S.D.D.*, the dried fruit of which is used as a water vessel. The *serok genok* is shown on pl. XXII, *f*; the label says, "*genok*, a gourd with a long twisted stalk; the fruit is used by the Dayaks to rub their bodies in the place

Gana, the tutelary deity of the soil and the spirit presiding over the whole work of rice-farming. (3) *Singalang Burong*, whose name probably means the Bird Chief. The Iban trace their descent from him and from him they learned the system of omens, and through the flights or calls of the omen-birds, his sons-in-law, he still communicates with his descendants. "These birds", said he, "possess my mind and spirit and represent me in the lower world. When you hear them, remember it is we who speak for encouragement or for warning" (Ling Roth, I, p. 200). His earthly form is the kite, *Haliastur intermedius*, a sub-species of *H. indus*, the Brahminy kite, which is reverenced by Hindus as sacred to Vishnu. He may also be said to be the Iban god of war and the guardian spirit of brave men. Hose and McDougall (II, p. 86) state that the Iban say that *Singalang Burong* never leaves his house and that for this reason they do not take omens from the hawks when going on the warpath.

The observance of omens occupies a large share of the thoughts of the Iban, and the system as carried out by them is most elaborate. The birds "used" by them are: *Membuas* (a kingfisher, *Carcineutes melanops*), *papau* (a trogon, *Harpactes diardi*, or ? *Dendrocitta cinerascens*), *beragai* (a trogon, *Harpactes duvaucelî*), *kutok* (*Lepocestes porphyromelas*), *katupong* (a woodpecker, *Sasia abnormis*), *nendak* (a kind of thrush, *Cittocincla suavis*), *briak* (*Orthotomus cineraceus*, the tailor bird, or *O. ruficeps*), *bejampong* (a shrike, *Platylophus coronatus* or *Hydrocichla frontalis*), *Enkrasak* (the spider-hunter, *arachnothera*, three sp.). The system also embraces the *rusa* (the deer, *Cervus equinus*), *kijang* (barking deer, *Cervulus muntjak*), *plandok* (mouse-deer, *Tragulus*), and sometimes even *aji* (the moon rat), *tengiling* (scaly anteater, *Manis*), *sandah* (bat), the *sawa* (python) and *tedong* (cobra), *tuchok* (house lizard, *gecko*) ("a species of grasshopper", *S.D.D.*), and the following insects *rioh*, *rejah*, *burong malam* (a cricket, *Gryllacris nigrilabris*). All these may be omens in various ways and circumstances and therefore, in this connection, they are designated *burong* (birds), and to augur from any of them is *beburong*. But these other creatures are subordinate to the birds, from which alone augury is sought at the beginning of any important business. Augury is sometimes taken from other animals. In the *S.D.D.* (p. 16) it is stated that the eight relatives or followers of *Singalang Burong* are: *beragai*, *katupong*, *bejampong*, *membuas*, *kutok*, *nendak*, *papau*, *briak*. Called

"birds" but holding a lower place and not considered "sacred" (indeed they are often eaten) are the insects *rioh*, *rejah* (grasshopper) and *burong malam* (ground cricket); the snakes *tedong* (cobra), *sawa* (python); the animals *rusa*, *kijang*, *plandok*, *remaung*, *tengiling* (the *Manis*), *aji* (moon rat), *engkarong* (the skinks), and bat. Good accounts of the omen animals of Sarawak are given by Ling Roth from various sources (1896, I, pp. 191–197, 221 ff.), Haddon (1901, pp. 381 ff.), Hose and McDougall (1901, pp. 173 ff.; 1912, II, pp. 51–90), in all of which references are made to the Iban. The most authoritative account of the religion and the omen animals of the Iban is that given by the Ven. Archdeacon J. Perham (see Ling Roth).

The Iban has surrounded himself with thousands of *antu*, or spirits, which are supposed to fill earth and air, sea and sky; they are adversaries or helpers of men, and the difference between them and *Petara* is imperceptible. The good ones are nearly identified with *Petara*, of whom no evil is predicated; but the bad and angry spirits are far more numerous than the good ones. *Antu* may appear to men as animals, such as deer, python, crocodiles, etc. In order to communicate with the supernatural, an Iban may *nampok*, sleep on the tops of mountains with the hope of meeting with the good spirits of the unseen world, but this custom is now much less frequent.

Some Iban men, and they mainly or solely Ulu Ai Iban, have a *ngarong* or secret helper, usually the spirit of some ancestor or dead relative, who may or may not inform the individual Iban to whom he manifests himself in what form he will appear in the future. An Ulu Ai Iban of the Batang Lupar informed Dr Hose that every Iban who has no *ngarong* hopes to get some bird or beast as his helper at the *begawai*, the feast given to the *Petara*. As the *ngarong* is one of the very few topics in regard to which the Iban display any reluctance to speak freely (Hose and McDougall, II, pp. 90 ff. and *J.A.I.* XXXI, 1901, pp. 199 ff.), it is very improbable that the animal form of this mysterious secret, the *ngarong*, should be represented on a cloth. It seems probable that the *ngarong* is an institution related to the *nampok*. There may have been some connection between the gaining of a *ngarong* and *nampok*.

The *engkaramba* figures that ward off harm have been noted on p. 105.

Very many of the designs and patterns appear to have been adopted for some reason connected with Iban beliefs; the choice of the motive to some extent may correspond with the ultimate use to which the cloth will be put.

137 The mangrove and nipa forests grow near the mouths of the Rejang and Terusan Rivers. The peat swamp forst is found in low-lying areas of the District and usually associated with alan forest which grows farther from the swamp center.

Although total cash value to timber exports (Table 3) has been biased towards the swamp woods, this is primarily because swamp ramin is sawn and the value of sawn timber is about two-and-one-half times the cash value per volume as logs. Future reserves are predominantly in the hills.

The forests contain two natural rubber trees, gutta percha and india rubber, which were of considerable commercial value until this century, when their importance has declined before the more useful Hevea brasiliensis or para rubber. Camphor, jelutong or chicle, rottans and various types of reeds are common. More than 100 different types of fruit have been identified (cf. Allen 1967), and many of these contribute substantially to the income of indigenes and Chinese.

3. Animals and Birds, Fish and Snakes

136 The animal population in the Sibu District has been vastly reduced within the past century. At the time of the Iban migrations in the mid-nineteenth century, and even until the beginning of the present century, writers described the capture of orang-utan (mayas) on Pulau

136 Kerutau opposite Sibu (Hose 1927-90), and the presence of macaques, gibbons, lorises, the proboscis monkey, and crocodiles in the District.[5] These animals are rarely encountered for they have been captured or killed by men who have entered the area, or they have fled into the upriver areas as the forest have been cut. Occasionally, honey-bears, wild pigs and deer are found and the last two damage rice crops, but in comparison to more protective forest areas farther upriver, the animal population in the Sibu District is relatively small and of minimal importance in the food quest of Ibans and others.

Smythies (1960) lists and describes more than 200 birds found on the island of Borneo. Of these, about two dozen are of economic or [223] ritual importance to the Ibans in this District.[6] In the former category are water-birds, pheasants, swifts, sparrows, hornbills and mynahs, the first three being trapped for food, sparrows being a serious pest to [787] rice crops, and the last two being caught to sell. Birds in the latter [178] group comprise the seven omen birds (Freeman 1960) and are important

---

[5] For more complete listing of animals see Banks 1949 or Low 1968.

[6] These include the following of economic importance: burong engkeruak, ruai, simpidan, chinggil, sengayan, pipit, entelit, kenyalang and tiong; of ritual significance: Ketupong, bubut, kuchai, tandok ulat, nendak, embuas, beragai, papau, bejampong, and pangkas. For English and scientific names see Smythies.

136 in Iban augury, though there are few tuai burong (augurs) found in this [707] District and bird-reading is rapidly disappearing. [178]

136 Many of the streams and rivers contain relatively plentiful 226 supplies of fish, shrimp and snails which constitute the principal source of meat and protein for the Ibans. The presence of several species is dependent upon the conditions of the water, whether high or low, and the techniques for catching the fish are adapted accordingly.

136 According to information supplied by the Sarawak Museum, there are only three species of poisonous snakes among the numerous reptiles [237] in Sarawak. These are the cobra, krait and adder. Several sub-species of python are found, the most common being the ular sawa (Python) and ular ripong (Python curtus), both of which are highly prized for their meat and the former for its skin which is preserved and sold to shop- [825] keepers or tourists. Occasionally, bayak (monitor lizards, family Varanidae) are captured by Ibans and Chinese, and either eaten or sold being valued as a source of strength.

B. Economic Bases of Sibu

177 Sibu has been built out of the forests of the Third Division. 439 The town has developed as an entrepot where imported goods have been exchanged for local forest products, the most important of which are jungle produce, rubber, pepper and timber. It is possible to distinguish three periods in the history of Sibu in each of which revenue